



★ **Cat Ninja: Time Heist**

Matthew Cody

Chad Thomas, Illustrator

Epic! (Nov 9, 2021)

Softcover \$9.99 (160pp)

978-1-5248-6758-4

In Matthew Cody's exciting graphic novel for children, creepy creatures create havoc in Metro City. Cat Ninja, who's up to his whiskers in villains, flies into action to stop a plan to take control of time itself.

Leon, Marcie, and their mom live in Metro City with their cat, Claude (alias Cat Ninja) and hamster, Mr. Squeaks (aka Master Hamster). Odd things happen in the town: for reasons unknown, its heroes turn into threats to the community. Cat Ninja, a silent yet powerful Kat Fu master, takes action, hoping to settle the situation. Meanwhile, Leon arrives home with an unusual egg, left over from a class chicken-raising project. When the family leaves to visit the city's aquarium, Claude and Mr. Squeaks, assigned to babysit the egg, confront one of the most dangerous situations of their crime-fighting careers.

The book's dynamic illustrations explode with color, energy, and emotion. The characters, each with their own gifts, are diverse and appealing: the two superheroes are introduced to a lovable baby owl with extreme superpowers, to a time-stealing villain who's hard to vanquish, and to the supreme power of love. High-tech, futuristic inventions and concepts, time travel, intergalactic relationships, and a good bit of magic figure into the story, wherein creativity and imagination are celebrated, as is the ability to work together to solve problems. The book's more subtle messages include what effects interfering in the past might have on the future and the impact of family divisions on children. Clever cast names, like "Elan Mollusk," are wry links to contemporary times.

Cat Ninja Time Heist is an exciting and futuristic adventure story about the importance of love and family.

KRISTINE MORRIS (November / December 2021)

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